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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001678

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [EU](#) [NATO](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: FM FRATTINI COMMENTS ON EUROPEAN DEFENSE SUMMIT

REF: BRUSSELS 2046

CLASSIFIED BY: A/DCM TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON:1.5 (B)(D)

1. (C) ON APRIL 16, MFA DEPUTY HEAD OF CABINET PASQUALE TERRACCIANO GAVE A/DCM A BRIEF READOUT OF FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI'S COMMENTS AT THE EU FM'S APRIL 14 LUNCH ON THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE SUMMIT. FRATTINI WAS APPARENTLY SCATHING IN HIS CRITICISM OF THE INITIATIVE, INSISTING, DESPITE ASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY BY BELGIAN FM MICHEL REPORTED REFTEL, THAT IT WOULD INDEED DAMAGE THE NATO ALLIANCE. FRATTINI TOLD HIS FELLOW MINISTERS THAT THE INITIATIVE WAS INCONSISTENT WITH ALL PREVIOUS EU DECLARATIONS STATING THAT ESDP WAS NOT DESIGNED TO SUPPLANT NATO. THE BELGIAN/FRENCH/GERMAN/LUXEMBOURG INITIATIVE WOULD DO JUST THAT, INSISTED FRATTINI, BY DUPLICATING OR EVEN REMOVING CAPABILITIES NOW RESIDING WITH NATO.

2. (C) AS REFTEL POINTS OUT, FRATTINI WAS NOT THE ONLY FM TROUBLED BY THE INITIATIVE. TERRACCIANO ALSO ADDED AN INTERESTING COMMENT ON INTERNAL GOI THINKING ON THE PROPOSAL. HE SAID THAT ANYONE IN THE MFA FAMILIAR WITH NATO SHARED FRATTINI'S STRONG RESERVATIONS. THE EXCEPTIONS ARE THE "EU SPECIALISTS" SUCH AS DIRGEN FOR EU INTEGRATION ROCCO CANGELOSI AND HIS DEPUTY FOR ESDP ISSUES SANDRO DEBERNADIN. WE WILL CERTAINLY DRIVE HOME OUR OWN VIEWS WITH THESE AND OTHER GOI INTERLOCUTORS AS APPROPRIATE. POST ALSO NOTES THAT PDAS RIES MEETS WITH CANGELOSI IN WASHINGTON ON APRIL 24.

SEMBLER

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